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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Slaughter Issues Statement on President's Veto of SCHIP

Legislation to Cover □ Nearly 4 Million Additional Children Nation-Wide DENIED by Bush

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Rules Committee, today issued the following statement on President Bush's veto of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

"It is absolutely disgraceful and reprehensible that the President would veto legislation passed with overwhelming Congressional support to provide millions of children with access to essential health care," said Rep. Slaughter. **"I will do everything in my power to override this appalling veto because whether it is access to preventative health care or treatment for an illness, the lives of millions of American children, including many in New York state, depend on it."**

"In New York, 400,000 children are enrolled in SCHIP, the second highest state enrollment in the nation. And with his veto pen today, the President denied another 268,000 children in our home state health care coverage. It is absolutely imperative we override this veto," concluded Slaughter. concl

BACKGROUND: The State Children's Health Insurance Program

- Congress created SCHIP in 1997 with broad bipartisan support. This year, six million children have health care because of SCHIP.
- Funding for SCHIP would have expired on September 30, but Congress included an extension of SCHIP until November 16th. If the President does not sign into law an SCHIP reauthorization bill, six million children will no longer have access to health care coverage.
- Children enrolled in the SCHIP program come from working families with parents who either cannot afford health insurance or hold jobs that do not provide health care benefits.
- Although the President highlighted his support for SCHIP while running for re-election in 2004, the Bush Administration and Congressional Republicans proposed to under-fund the program significantly. Millions of children would lose coverage as a result.

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